

quite fresh. Two birds from Denham, Sharks Bay (July 23, 1944; August 4, 1943) are badly worn. The season of moult is apparently not the same in all parts of the range, nor perhaps in all years. Old specimens, owing to foxing, are much more brownish above than recently collected ones.

Remarks. The available material does not permit any subdivision of *balstoni*. The few specimens in comparable plumage condition suggest that in birds from Geraldton and the mouth of the Murehison River the spotting of the under parts is rather copious, and reaching far up towards the chin, the marks appear to be streaks rather than spots. Specimens from the northern extremity of the range (Wooramel River) appear indistinguishable. Birds from the Peron Peninsula have a tendency toward having the spots rounder and reaching less far up to the chin, birds from Bernier and Dorre Islands again are more like Geraldton birds. There appears to be no consistent difference between all these populations in the colour of the upper parts, of the face, and of the tail tip.

It is significant that *hartogi*, *geraldtonensis* and *houtmanensis* in their original description were compared only to *maculatus* and not to *balstoni*, with which these names are either synonymous (*hartogi*, *geraldtonensis*), or to which they are at least most closely related (*houtmanensis*).

Sericornis maculatus houtmanensis Zietz

Sericornis maculatus houtmanensis Zietz, 1921. *South Austr. Ornith.*, 6: 44. Houtman's Abrolhos.

Sericornis maculatus fuscipes Alexander, 1922, *Journ. Linn. Soc. London*, 34: 465. Wallaby Island, Houtman's Abrolhos.

Similar to *balstoni*, but bill and legs darker; spotting on throat and breast and perhaps also black marks in the face of the male much reduced; more white on forehead; less white on tips of tail feathers; no yellow on under parts; rump coloured as the back; general coloration of upper parts not clearly different from that of *balstoni*.

Wing, ♂ 51.5, ♀ 47, 48, 50; tail, ♂ 47, ♀ 45, 45.5, 47.

Range. Abrolhos Islands (East and West Wallaby Islands).

We have seen only four skins which are rather too soiled to permit an accurate description of the coloration, as well as three fresh birds (1 ♂, 2 ♀), collected by D. L. Serventy, December 8, 1945, of which at least the male is not fully adult.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Strepera versicolor feeding on *Bothriembryon*.—During February, 1952, I was collecting for the Museum in the Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun districts. On one of my field excursions near the Phillips River I disturbed several parties of the Squeaker (*Strepera versicolor*), busily feeding on the ground. Their behaviour attracted my attention. Various individuals would stand with their legs well apart and commence to sweep the debris on

the ground with their beaks, thus exposing whatever food items they were seeking. When the birds flew off at my approach I examined the disturbed ground and found several native snails. Some of the snails were alive with the shell complete, others had holes in the shells, obviously made by the feeding birds, and in others the shells were fractured. The shells were brown in colour and about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in length. I collected a number of undamaged specimens, which were later identified by Mr. A. R. Main as *Bothriembryon balteolus*.

Residents in the district told me that when there is a "plague" of these snails the Squeakers are about in large numbers.

Major H. M. Whittell (*W.A. Nat.*, vol. 3, 1952, p. 79) has reproduced field notes by the late S. W. Jackson, describing the feeding by Squeakers on tree-frequenting *Bothriembryon* in the karri forests of the South-west.

—K. G. BULLER, W.A. Museum, Perth.

An Extension of Range of the Western Tiger Snake.—The generally accepted distribution range of the Western Tiger Snake (*Notochis scutatus occidentalis* Glauert) in this State is the South-west, as far north as the Moore River. I was surprised, therefore, to kill a specimen of this form in the vicinity of a large dam at Nangetty Station, 16 miles north of Mingenew, on September 19, 1953.

The colour of the reptile was blue-black above and pale beneath. It measured about 4 ft. 6 in. in length and was at first mistaken for a Mulga Snake (*Pseudechis australis* (Gray)). On being disturbed, however, it showed the characteristic aggressiveness of the Tiger Snake and flattened its neck when rearing to strike.

Unfortunately no facilities were available for preserving the snake but a careful examination was made of the sub-caudal scales, all of which were complete. This feature separates the Tiger Snake from the Mulga Snake (which has the terminal sub-caudals divided) and from the various forms of the Dugite or Brown Snake (*Demansia nuchalis*) (in which the anal and all the sub-caudals are divided).

—C. F. H. JENKINS, Agricultural Department, Perth.

Fresh-water Polyzoa from Western Australia.—E. J. Goddard ("Australian fresh-water Polyzoa," *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, vol. 34, 1909, pp. 487-496) listed genera and described new species of Polyzoa collected in Australia. Of the species listed by him *Plumatella repens* van Beneden had a cosmopolitan distribution. This wide range is presumably achieved by the aerial dispersal of the drought-resistant statoblasts.

The distribution listed by Goddard was extended by V. V. Hickman and E. O. G. Scott ("The occurrence of the fresh-water